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Are There Mermaids Living Now?

Any fond gentleman have a mermaid?

You lovers who have dreamed of the melodious Lorelei in the storied Rhine; you passionate adventurers who have longed to be Ulysses, lashed to the mast, with a penknife to cut the lashings; you bathhouse Tritons who have longed for sea-maidens who didn't wear high heels on beaches, because fish-tails and bathing shoes don't go; you Polyphemuses and you Glaucuses to whose fond fancy Galatea, porpoise-drawn, alone will suffice—for all of you the blissful news is here.

The mermaid is real. There are sirens in the sea more genuine than any song by romancing Homer, more quick with life than the noticeably healthy imitations you have been enraptured with on the operatic stage.

Be satisfied with that. Read no further. Stick to the good old tales of the shellbacks who have been wooed by sirens in shoals, and would have brought 'em along home for marriage and divorce if only some trick of balking fate hadn't ravished them from eager sailor arms.

The rest of this tale is for the girls you have been so ready to forsake. It'll comfort them more than it can please you, because, while the reality is genuine, it is very different from your poetic dreams.

The mermaid proves a creature far indeed from the ideal sea-maiden the romancers have pictured her, as far from the fatal fascinations of her reputation as her abode is from the languorous tropics to which the myth of natural history has assigned her.

She doesn't haunt the soft Aegean or comb her streaming locks on sunny Grecian shores. It's the Bering sea for hers; and if any one goes a-wooing, he can omit the tortoise-shell comb and the white bristle brush from the toilet set he's taking along. They may prove baldheaded. The mermaid as she has appeared in the flesh wouldn't arouse the jealousy of a two-weeks' bride.

The zoologists of France are just now trawling along with their microscopes and measuring tapes in the wake of the crowds of ordinary humans who are flocking to Dijon, in France, to gaze on a natural-born siren, who, that or which has been placed on public view. She—or is she It?—was found in a cave on Bering sea. She—might as well give her the benefit of the doubt—was, alas! extremely dead when found. But she is all there except her hair, the skull being covered with a bare yellowish skin. Nobody can tell yet whether she was born that way or whether a rival snatched her tresses from her to make an extra rat; fashions are a bit behind-hand near the north pole.

As far down as her waist the siren at Dijon is a woman, with a woman's breasts and with arms and hands altogether human, except that the fingers end in great claws. Her teeth, in-

stead of being pearly jewels of beauty set in coral, are as pointed as a cat's—very useful in the assimilation of porgies and whitefish, but scarcely an asset for a Venus.

Below the waist she is plain fish; of enormous proportions as to the tail, as might be expected of any fish equipped with an upper body the size of a woman. If there is beauty to her, at all, it is to be found in the fish half, which is all elegance and grace from the piscatorial point of view, where the human features above are those of a freak or monstrosity.

French scientists, for the time being, seem to have taken the specimen seriously and are giving her an honest consideration. The local public is divided as to her genuineness, although with the majority seeing is believing.

In the past mermaid fakes have been worked in the United States as well as in Europe, with appeals to the credulity of all classes of people. A few years ago the mermaid was a common sideshow attraction with the small circus—not a very difficult illusion to produce under conditions of flickering artificial light and a stream of spectators hustled along so fast that they had only a hurried glimpse of the blonde lady from Fourth avenue, New York, wearing a scaly tail more or less neatly attached to her at the hips.

In an eastern "medical" museum there was shown for many years the mummy of a little mermaid which in most particulars, corresponded to the formation of the siren now on view at Dijon. But it stayed in the museum window so long and it dried out so completely that, after a while, passersby had no difficulty in discerning where and how the fish-tail had been joined to the body of a malformed and very small infant.

The siren from Bering sea, should she by any wonderful chance prove to be the real thing, would leave the human belles of the seashore forever free from mermaid rivalry. The only word that can describe the appearance of such a libel on womanhood is "hideous."

Anatomists have never been able to imagine how the mermaid could exist, for the whole economy of one structure negatives that of the other.

Yet a modification of the siren of tradition might possibly live under a modification of the conditions that have been attributed to her. Replace the human legs from the thighs downward with two tails and leave the creature only slightly amphibious—no more than the capacity for extended submersion that belongs to Indian pearl divers—and it is possible to conceive of the womanfish not only surviving to maturity in the shelter of ocean caves, but of reproducing her kind after the manner of the human mother.

Science has found many a truth—fancifully distorted, it must be admitted—in the myths and legends which were long regarded as wanton insults to the average intelligence.

LOBSTERS FOR THE PACIFIC.

There is great hope of the successful planting and propagation of the American lobster in the waters of Oregon and Washington, after many attempts have failed. This cheering information is imparted in a voluminous bulletin of the United States Bureau of Fisheries, written by Dr. Francis Hobart Herrick, which, from its thoroughness, seems to deserve the title "All that is worth knowing about the lobster."

Five attempts to acclimate the American lobster on the Pacific Coast were made between 1874 and 1889, when 590 animals, some of them with eggs, were successfully carried across the continent and distributed all along the coast from Monterey bay to Puget Sound. Concerning these attempts Dr. Hugh M. Smith of the fisheries bureau wrote:

"No positive results having appeared, the experiment was renewed in the fall of 1906, when a special carload of brood lobsters, numbering more than all the previous plants combined, was dispatched to Puget Sound, and in 1907 a still more extensive plant, aggregating about 1000 adult lobsters, was made in the same water. Further consignments will be made until the lobster is removed from the list of failures and recorded as a great financial as well as a gastronomic success."

Although Dr. Smith fails to distinguish between the two sections, a large part of the last shipment of lobsters was sent to Yaquina bay, Or. Dr. Herrick promises perseverance in propagating lobsters in the Pacific, saying:

"We believe that this bureau has taken a most commendable step, and in the right direction, the initial attempt being to find a water where the Atlantic lobster will thrive. When this

primary question has been settled, further importations to that point, supplemented in time by artificial propagation, promise well for the eventual establishment of new and remote fisheries which, for all that is now known to the contrary, may at some future day enjoy a greater prosperity even than those nearer home."

Lobsters have been a favorite luxury of the Atlantic Coast since the days of the Pilgrims, who caught them weighing twenty-five pounds apiece, a giant one weighing thirty-four pounds. In 1740 large lobsters sold for "3 half-pence" each, but the price is now 5 cents a pound, that price being paid for one weighing three pounds nine and a quarter ounces, which is equivalent to 90 cents a pound for the clear meat. The product of the lobster fisheries of both America and Europe has diminished enormously in the last two decades, particularly in the United States and Canada, but the increase in price has been such that the present aggregate value is much larger. The average size has also much diminished, the present legal limit of catch being one and three-quarters pounds. If the lobster should be acclimated on the Pacific, stringent laws, strictly enforced, will be necessary to allow it to grow and multiply.

—Portland Oregonian.

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BY AUTHORITY

RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE STORAGE OF FREIGHT ON TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT WHARVES.

No. 1. Foreign Cargoes:

Foreign freight may remain on the wharf after a General Order has been issued by the Custom House as follows:

Cargoes of less than 2500 tons, 48 hours.

Cargoes of over 2500 tons, 72 hours.

The above does not apply to freight for trans-shipment when such trans-shipment is designated in original bills of lading and on packages.

No. 2. Domestic Cargoes from Outside the Territory:

Domestic freight must be removed from the wharf within the following number of days, to commence on the day upon which the vessel completes discharge:

Domestic cargoes up to 2000 tons, delivered at any one wharf, must be removed from said wharf three days after completion of discharge of vessel.

Domestic cargoes up to 3000 tons, delivered at any one wharf, must be removed from said wharf four days after completion of discharge of vessel.

Domestic cargoes up to 4000 tons, delivered at any one wharf, must be removed from said wharf five days after completion of discharge of vessel.

Domestic cargoes over 4000 tons, delivered at any one wharf, must be removed from said wharf six days after completion of discharge of vessel.

The above does not apply to freight for trans-shipment when such trans-shipment is designated in original bills of lading and on packages.

No. 3. Inter-Island Cargoes:

Domestic freight from Inter-Island ports, for delivery within the City and County of Honolulu, must be removed within two (2) working days after the day of the arrival of the vessel bringing such freight.

No. 4. Outgoing Freight Originating in the City and County of Honolulu:

On all outgoing freight, originating in the City and County of Honolulu, three (3) days' free storage on wharf will be allowed prior to the commencement of loading of vessel.

No. 5. Gasoline, Etc.:

Gasoline, kerosene, distillate, benzine and other products of petroleum; also paint and paint oils, if in leaky containers, must be removed by the consignees from the wharf by 5 o'clock p. m. of the day of their being discharged.

None of the above articles shall be discharged from any vessel, except between the hours of 7 a. m. and 3:30 p. m. of any day. Upon failure to so remove said articles prior to 5 o'clock p. m. of any day, the Harbor Master must remove said articles; all charges in connection therewith being borne by the consignee.

No. 6. Demurrage:

Demurrage will be charged at the following rates per ton per day: On freight originating in the City and County of Honolulu, or destined for Honolulu delivery, 25 cents.

No freight, subject to demurrage, shall be removed from the dock by the consignee or other person until all charges thereon shall have been paid and a written release given by the Harbor Master.

No. 7. Definition of a Ton:

For the purpose of computing demurrage, a ton is 2000 pounds, or 40 cubic feet; either to be used in the discretion of the Harbor Master; or either as listed on ship's manifest which discharge such freight.

No. 8. Definition of a Day:

Twenty-four (24) hours shall constitute a day, commencing at 12 o'clock midnight; and fractional parts thereof shall be charged as a full day.

No. 9. Penalty for Violation of Rules and Regulations:

Any person or persons who shall violate any of the above Rules or Regulations shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be subject to the penalties as provided by Section 9, Act 163 of the Session Laws of 1911.

Approved Wednesday, September 20, 1911.

MARSTON CAMPBELL,
Chairman, Board of Harbor Commissioners.

EMIL A. BERNDT,
Secretary, Board of Harbor Commissioners.

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